

Application No. 09/781,901
Amendment dated July 13, 2005
Reply to Final Office Action of May 25, 2005

Docket No. 4150-4-00US1

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended in a telephone interview conducted on June 30, 2005. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-308 are pending in this application. Claims 67-71 and 138-308 are withdrawn from consideration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.142(b) based on the reply filed on September 3, 2004. As a result, claims 1-66 and 72-137 are currently being considered. Claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127 are independent. Claims 1-66 and 72-137 stand rejected. By this amendment, withdrawn claims 67-71 and 138-308 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Independent claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127 are amended. Dependent claims 10, 13, 23, 26, 34, 37, 43, 46, 52, 55, 63, 66, 81, 94, 105, 114, 123 and 1-4 are also amended. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-66 and 72-137 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over an IEEE article entitled "Applying Agents to Search Goods Information Based on Three-Level Metadata Architectures" (1999, pp. 630-634, ISBN:0-7695-0281-4) by Liu ("Liu") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,127 to Leeke et al. ("Leeke"). The Examiner indicated among other things that "[c]onversely, a stored directory of the Web is also derived by searching at some time, perhaps a milisecond prior to the query rather than a milisecond after the query. There is no distinction between the two cases that is significant to a user." (Page 3 of the Final Office Action)

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Independent claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127 have been amended for further clarification. In particular, each of the amended independent claims recites that "the categories ... are pre-selected and uploaded by a service provider of the internet virtual directory system." Support for the amendment may be found throughout the teachings of the original specification. For example, the third full paragraph of page 10 (i.e., lines 22-30) describes that "[f]irst interface 300 usually shows a plurality of search categories ... The available categories on the screen are pre-selected and up-loaded by the directory service provider." Furthermore, the second full paragraph of page 11 (i.e., lines 13-24) describes that "[t]he second level search categories are pre-selected by the service provider as corresponding to the selected first level category."

As Applicant explained to the Examiner during the telephone interview, one of the aspects of the virtual directory system of the present invention is that it does not perform an internet search throughout the databases of the internet on each interface level. Instead, the categories of each of the multiple levels of the directory system are pre-selected and uploaded by a service provider of the directory system. In other words, the server of the service provider (i.e., the internet virtual directory system) already stores the pre-selected and uploaded categories on each interface level and displays the categories to a user without searching for them throughout the databases of the internet.

In contrast, as Applicant also explained to the Examiner during the telephone interview, the multi-level metadata search architecture of Liu is directed to a conventional search engine that still requires an internet search through the databases of the internet on each level. While the multi-level metadata search architecture of Liu allegedly narrows the search area on each

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level by a certain level of filtering, Liu's search system still doesn't have any control on the number of searched items in the manner provided by Applicant's preselected and uploaded architecture. Please refer to Applicant's previous Amendment filed on May 5, 2005 for more detailed characterization of Liu's search system.

Since Leek further fails to show or suggest the present invention, each of independent claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127 as amended is believed neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of Liu and Leeke, either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons as discussed above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) of claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127, and claims which depend therefrom is respectfully requested.

Applicant has not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicant submits that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicant, however, respectfully reserves the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims if necessary.

New Claims

New claims 309-319 are added to recite the claimed invention in an alternative manner. Specifically, added independent claim 309 recites a method for providing an internet virtual directory system that comprises, *inter alia*, "transmitting a display of a web page of an internet web site corresponding to said search category wherein said search categories for each interface are preselected and uploaded by a service provider of said internet virtual directory system.

Accordingly, Applicant believes that new claim 309 and claims dependent therefrom (i.e., claims 310-319) are also allowable over the cited art of record for at least the similar reason:

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discussed above for claims 1, 14, 27, 38, 47, 56, 72, 85, 98, 109, 118 and 127 as amended.

Applicant believes that the application as amended including the new claims is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

AUTHORIZATION

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional petitions and/or fees are required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition to Deposit Account No. 13-4501 (Order No. 4150-4000US1). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

Dated: July 13, 2005.

By:


Sung Ho Hong
Registration No. 54,571

Correspondence Address:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
3 World Financial Center
New York, NY 10281-2101
(212) 415-8700 (Telephone)
(212) 415-8701 (Facsimile)

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Sungho Hong
Registration No. 54,571

Correspondence Address:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
3 World Financial Center
New York, NY 10281-2101
(212) 415-8700 (Telephone)
(212) 415-8701 (Facsimile)